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[TITLE PAGE]

Some Observations of a Fieldtrip among the Shilluk

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The Shilluk occupy a country that extends from 9°47' N. to 5°38 latitude, particularly the west bank of the White Nile from about 30 miles - meters north of Kodok to approximately 30 kilometres east of Lake No. There is also a Shilluk pocket within Northern Bahrelghazel. Thus they occupy the right bank of the White Nile from near Kaidi to the confluence of the Sobat. They also extend some 60 kilometres up the Sobat river, mainly on its northern bank.

The Shilluk settlements, if they can be called villages, are situated from about half a kilometre to a kilometer off the river bank giving the impression of being in a dodge(?), also, on the banks of the khors i.e. seasonal streams which discharge into the Nile, widely from the west or east and slightly toward the Nile. Shilluk settlements are to be found. The breadth of the Shilluk land does not exceed a five hour march from the banks of the river(N) and there is no-man's land which stretches east to the west till the Baka-Hills. This is used as a dry season (water) grazing land by both Shilluk and nomad Baggara Arabs, but the Shilluk do not, as a rule, pasture their cattle as far to the east. This can be quite unknown only to those who have never gone from the river banks to the Baka mountains. The hydrology of this area is not known although some known information is with sources estimated as parallel to the Nile and joining other khors to discharge seasonal waters into the Nile north of Kodok.

The Nile is the main waterway in the Shilluk land and because the Shilluk have a comparatively long water front they are the most skilled fishermen of the Nilotic group. The most important khor is the called Dello which takes its water from the Nile, or more precisely from the back-swamps against Malakal and runs parallel to the Nile separated from it only by a stretch of comparatively high bank, and by three kilometres broad, and then discharges again in the Nile south of Kodok. Apart there is another khor called khor Awagier which rises from the west and discharges into the Nile. (3) This khor is of almost no hydrological importance, but of a great significance in the realm of Shilluk economics and spiritual thinking. This khor is the boundary between the two religious provinces into which Shilluk-land is divided. On its banks one of the important rites of King installation takes place.

The Shilluk country is open or less a flat land covered with Savannah grass and with occasional clusters of trees, mainly along river and khor banks. The most famous tree is the Doleb (Borassus aethiopum) which grows to beautiful groves on the Nile banks. The rainy season begins in May but occasional showers heralding the rains occur at the end of March and early April. The dry season begins near the end of October. Rainfall is important to the earth, here is the most crucial factor of our existence.

Pangak (1939) 1917 mm
Malakal (1938) 1211 mm
Kodok (1938) 1000 mm
Nasir (1940) 548 mm

The Shilluk, owing to their geographical conditions, are more sedentary than the other Nilotic tribes, and there is no great transhumance as among the others. They also are more intent on cultivation, more [sorghum vulgare] being the chief crop. They use a shifting cultivation technique; a certain plot of land is cultivated from four to six years and then left for two to twelve years. An agricultural authority (3) on the Sudan said that "cotton as a cash crop began in 1917. But the Shilluk as well as the other Nilotes, are poor cultivators. The biggest crop of cotton is a twenty year period was 300 tons of raw cotton, mainly from the Shilluk Lnd. It was abandoned and Durra began to take an importance because the country contains a fairly large amount of excess oil."

Cassada, to the latest census available there are about 8%, see Shilluk.(5)

Anthropometrics

During my stay in the Shilluk Land I have taken anthropometric measurements on forty persons - 30 men, 10 of them are members of the Shilluk royal family, and 6 women, one of them is also royal. The persons were all measured at Kaldol Town, but they are from different parts of the Shilluklands covering the whole area from north to south. Secondly I have a greater percentage of people representing the central area, i.e. around Kaldol, and the percentage decreases north-ward and south-ward. Here is a list of the villages and settlements to which my subjects belong:

Akurua, Fun, Fubic (Grand district), Atoop, Alel, Atoy (north of Kaldol), Kwark, Tolkony, Lul, Fyingan, Inner Lul, Fwoth (Inner eastern Lul), Ador, Kwoty (n.w. Kaldol), Tyeth-Kelo (northern bank), Fwoth, Tarijak, Kwayo, Fukan, Kyinyan, Kwor, Tango, Atar and Kyijoh.

I have taken the following measurements following the points described and defined in "Notes and Queries in Anthropology." (7)
Head length and breadth, nose length and breadth, facial and upper facial heights, stature and sitting height. On 8 of the men measured I recorded also the minimal frontal breadth and the bizygomatic breadth.

The tools I used were the sliding and spreading calipers, and the anthropometer.

The results of my measurements are mainly identical with those of Seligman [8] in both cephalic and facial indices and stature, but there is a considerable difference in the nasal index which I am not able to explain.

♂ Seligman (8)	C.I. 74.3	F.I. 93.9	N.I. 83.2	S.(cm) 177
Rind (3)	74.8	85.3	84.5	177.0

From the distribution of the physical characters in different parts of the Shilluklands - 12 of the men measured by me are from Fwoth (northern Shilluk province), and 22 men are from Lul (southern Shilluk province) - we get a very interesting, though it remained that the Shilluk are not a homogenous people as far as cephalic index and stature are concerned.

		C.I.	I.I.	L. (cm)
"F"	Core Dyer. (12)	72.2	66.7	178.6
	Local " (22)	71.1	66.4	178.8

This is further and clearly illustrated from the measurements taken only on the Caio I any common Skillak other than the members of the royal family and the Dyers members:

"F"	Core Dyer. (6)	73.3	67.3	178.3
	Local " (17)	71.7	65.0	174.5

Here the differences are shown more clearly than those in table "F" in that royal members are included. This means, that the royal members have not, so to say, a compromising effect on the indices and further it seems that the royal members have different anthropometric qualities. This is shown in table "F".

	C.I.	S.I.	L.(cm)
Royals (7)	72.8	67.9	178.9
Caio (8)	72.5	67.2	178.5

Also there is a tendency among the royal family members to differentiate physically, in north and south. This may be seen clearly in table "F".

Dyer (5)	71.1	67.9	178.7
Local (5)	72.5	67.9	179.2

The same indices for the 6 women were

"F"			
Caio(3)	72.1	66.1	162.9
Royal (4)	72.22	65.1	165.7

Here we also see the differences between commoners and nobles, though the number of samples is not sufficient to study by itself. As beyond here on to results of the 34 men measured to study that differences of physical characteristics also exist, Skillak women.

Now here are some notes on the foregoing tables, to sum up, for the time being, a hurried conclusion liable to alteration if new anthropometric studies of the Skillak and related tribes are undertaken in the future.

1. The difference in the Nasal index in table "E" may be attributed to difference in the points of measurement between Professor Seligman and me, since Seligman has taken his samples from a certain area in the Skillak-land. If this happens to be the case, it is most probable that the majority of the samples were taken from southern Skillakland in general, and the districts of Tango and Ruaring specifically, because my samples in this area has the highest nasal indices recorded as shown in table "E" below.

2. The remarkable differences between north and south, shown in tables "F" and "I", are a matter of the first degree of importance. This is the first time, so far as I know, that this difference has been brought to light, and its importance is not a self-contained racial matter, but is connected by Skillak cytology in which North and South stand opposed to each other as two political units and in certain times as two religious units.

The racial differences may be fully understood and explained by Shilluk mythology. Nyikang, the demigod and the Shilluk culture hero, came, with his followers, to the southern part of present Shillukland and erected his headquarters at Fyilual, in Fashoda district. Then he proceeded northward to extend his boundary and to found his kingdom, he found the lands on either side of the Nile already inhabited. The aboriginal people are said to have been Koko and Burg, or according to one authority (9) Dungulongo or Berebra. It seems to be that the Funjs were not really the inhabitants of the land, but were reasonably they were ruling the country, especially the part of it which lies on the right bank of the Nile. At any rate, Nyikang conquered the present Shillukland in a peaceful way sometime, and by means of force in in these instances where people showed resistance. The people either fled to the Nuba mountains and Sennar, or stayed in the land. Those who stayed were not reduced to slaves, but were accepted as Shilluk citizens and thus incorporated into the Shilluk nation.

The high cephalic index in the north may be attributed to a Nuba influence, more specifically to an eastern Nuba influence, or to a mesocephalic influence from the Ler Burg Hills.

There is no other nearby area of mesocephals than the eastern Nuba Hills. The most eastern area of mesocephals is the Ler Burg mountains which lie within a range of between 200 to 400 kilometers northeast of the Shilluk land across the Nile. Here first are some anthropometric measurements from both mesocephalic areas:

	C.I.	S.I.	F.I.	U.F.I.	S.(cm)
Nuba Hills (W)					
Tegale (?)	79	87)	76.5	64.5	
Ilyry & Lafofa(?W)	78.42	92.26	82.26	66.19	173.82
Lyrae (?W)	78.48	97.43)			
Tirmal .Abdur, Abdl.Lardrem					
Khamis (?)	77.77	92.37)	82.42	65.75	169.0
Nuba, unsex (?W)	78.50	94.03)	83.48	66.23	153.2
Ilyry (?W)	75.95	94.6			
Ler Burg Hills (?)					
Burg (?)	74.6	87.3)	84.9	66.5	178
Ingessana (?W)	73.1	91.6	82.8	64.5	177
Sheen (?)	73.6	96.3	82.1	65.9	
Uduk (?)	77.6	93.0	71.9	63.7	167
Berun (?W)	75.2	84.5)	83.1	64.6	178
Jum Jum (?)	75.3				
Maban (?W)	78.1	96.0	84.0	67.0	178

Hypothetically we can say that there two areas in the past formed a mesocephalic belt, one separated through the migration of the Mesocephalic Burta of the Nuba Hills, on the eastern bank, and the Shilluk and Nuggara tribes on the western bank of the Nile.

Both areas, within themselves, do not form racial entities, but are more or less mixed areas. They are usually conglomerations of different physical and cultural types which have fled from the plains in front of any conquest. But the most important factors that influence them (not politically, but from our scientific standpoint) is their mesocephalic character.

19c P14 How it is impossible to suggest that all people fled to the hills because of an instance of superior invading army will naturally stay in their land and will incorporate with the new-comers. At first they may well form a caste, they may also be reduced to slavery, but through the factor of time intermarriage will occur, and the conquerors and conquered will fuse into a harmonious unit. This process depends upon the policy followed by the conquerors; if will be allowed to develop if the conquerors accept the aborigines in the frame of their society. The opposite picture will result if the invaders insist upon wholly exterminating the aborigines. Many factors define the policy of the invaders, but the most important is the numerical factor. If it is a big objectional wave, then there is no question of peaceful incorporation and amalgamation, and if they form a minor minority wave, they will be keen on the amalgamation policy. The latter case was that which we can deduce from the Shilluk legend. They were no less open populating the country that they fell on than Nyikang, through his supernatural powers and the help of Juk, his son, caught mysterious people from the river, and changed animals into men to make them their subjects and to incorporate them into their nation.

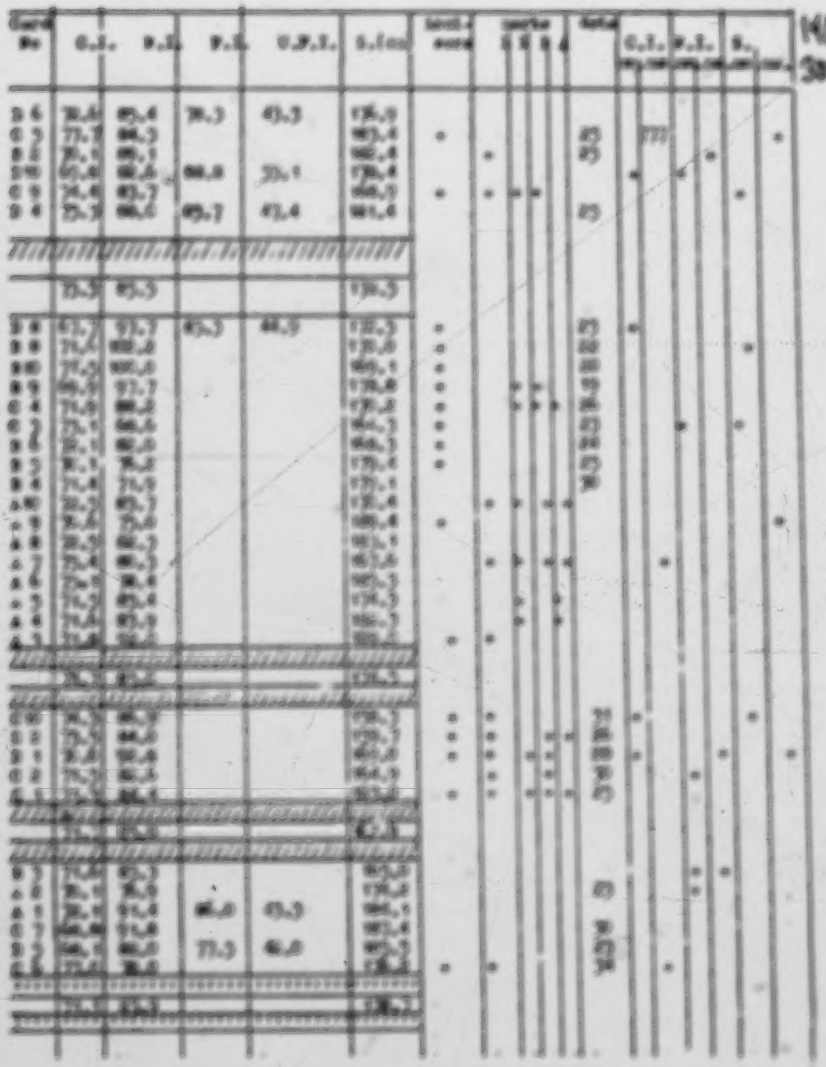
If this was the case, then we should be able to say that the present Shilluk land, before the coming of the Shilluk of Nyikang, was populated by at least a negrohamitic group in the north and a negrohamitic group in the south, culturally and perhaps politically superior. The negrohamitic group may be the racial substratum of the Acholi and of the Nilotes of the Sudan.

19f 19f 3. The further heterogeneity of the Shilluk, which table "F" reveals, is quite understandable. The Shilluk legends and myths tell us that the founder of the nation and his followers came from a far country near "Bar Jiem" which means a broad and big river, a lake, a salt sea or a lake shore.

The physical qualities of the royal family members, as shown in table "F", do not give any clue to the real origin of this objection, because these qualities are shared by most of the inhabitants of the bigger area around the Shilluk land. Long-headedness is nearly universal in Africa. The tendency to broadness of nose and lip be attributed to Eurasian (Libyan) influences in the northern half of the continent and to Negro influences in the central parts. From other evidences such as their legends and the legends of other Shilluk-speaking tribes, as well as other circumstantial evidences we can speculate on the original home of the Shilluk. Many theories have been introduced to account for the origin of the Shilluk, but here is not the right place to discuss this controversial problem.

4. In table "F" we see further discrepancy. The tendency to a higher exogamic index is readily explained if we understand the Shilluk social institutions. The kings carry out/some according to the law of inheritance which is prevalent among the Shilluk, i.e. the eldest son of the king can succeed, they are sent to their villages to give birth. The royal babies are never born in Fashoda, and they stay in the village of their birth under the protection and guidance of the village chief.

We can conclude that the racial heterogeneity of the Shilluk is not simple. These factors play a role in the ethnic composition of this nation and like many other nations, these different elements are fused into a social and cultural unit.



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Other body marks are also made at will ,at best as religious significance. The people say that it is nice to put these lines on the body, especially for young men and women and for dancing festivals. These marks like many forms - examples, tigre, geometrical designs, or even military signs, especially that of a sergeant on the upper arm. 30 4 177

Clothing.

Dellenger states that "... in former times the unfortunate evil Pollution for Nile and Sobat, an ox-fly "no longer for the Shilluk." (8) He also writes " Abroad the Nuer is Shilluk-land first known when fighting ging, which we all Nuer refer to disease threatens enders." (9) and " Longuan begisters him with other diseases fields, sublime charitable talked and religious the hard passages let, sublime silver movement fact also characteristics. He visits have met the Protestant for Shilluk the disease Nuer the reconnaissance intervention." (2. During my sojourn among the Shilluk I noticed one great difference among the Shilluk and the other Nilotic tribes , this being that the Shilluk were always dressed -at times as well as in their own villages, children being the only exception - and others were not. Shirts drawn to collect in their own tongue LUO, and consists of a piece of cloth of any colour, but mostly white. The LUO is placed round the body, so that it reaches down to the knees and is knotted in a special way on the left shoulder by one LUO and the right shoulder by women. Such also were some other articles which is well remarked by Hofmayer.(12) But the question to that Shilluk is a statement Shilluk dress; it is neither European nor Arabic from the northern Sudan. It distinguishes not the Nuer or the Dinka, who are supposed to have some kinship with the Shilluk, yet are quite naked. Hofmayer's statements, as quoted above, was written in 1911. It is quite impossible that in Shilluk have altered one of the most important habits over a period of 30 or 40 years, having into account the extreme conservative spirit which all natives attributes to the Shilluk and other Nilotes. Secondly, if the Shilluk are known to dress due to the introduction of Christian values and religion, they would have adopted the European dress. (13) rather than invent a new type of dress foreign to both missionaries and Shilluk. So, if this was due to Christian values, why did it not produce the same effect among the Dinka and Nuer, among whom missionary activity has been done there many the Shilluk ? Hofmayer contradicts himself in the same book, i.e. the ancient Shilluk king, who lived about 1580 A.D., before he died, ordered himself, and " five noblemen among Nilotic Col with us.." (14). This means that the Shilluk used to dress themselves from the beginning of their known history. 89 241 [77]

I turn also on the basis of a century to which the difference between the two sexes are, or were, so far as that which is could understand from Hofmayer's description, i.e. was go naked while women wore a complicated dress apron composed of two pieces for the unmarried and of three pieces for the married. [77]

There is also a traditional economy of importance in the Shilluk political organization. Every new chief of a settlement, which is a combined group of blood ties, has to be confirmed in his post by the king. This takes the form of formality; the new chief with a LUO with the king "personally receiving this robe over the joints (chief) shoulder" (15). In a similar manner, the chief of a hostile (a foreign group) homestead to a settlement) may go to consult with a LUO "directly from the king, or from the settlement) may be [18] "such good attention and conditions the clans and cross-marriages, so little cost for the children." 241 621 643

[19] " while the men in Shilluk country almost always went without clothing, the women behaved differently in this respect."

[20] Slowly in the beginning but now that time, Christian culture and religion has also penetrated among these people, a sign that in the end is coming. Already one can see that the standard of the Shilluk is changing from this country"

29| invested with a LAUR, " directly from the King, or from the settlement chief."
(26) This ceremony shows clearly that the LAUR plays a symbolic role in the
62| Shilluk political institutions. (27) These institutions are more or less matters
643 of tradition , and traditions are rarely engaged in a conservative society.

29| I have dwelt at length upon this problem, not only to criticise
Hofmayer, but mainly to direct attention to one of the most important cultural
characteristics of the Shilluk, in comparison with other Nilotic groups, and
to show that this is not a newly acquired custom, but has deep roots in the past
that can be explained by cultural contact or diffusion that affected only the
Shilluk.

Notes.

113 (1) Seligman, C.G., & B. Z.[Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan, London 1932
p.46
(2) Hofmayer, W., The Shilluk, Vienna 1927, p.84).
62 (3) The word means the "meeting-place of the people".
(4) Trowell, J.D., Agriculture in the Sudan, London 1948, p.87)
(5) Ibid, pp. 88E/87
(6) Ibid, p. 810
(7) Seligman, B. Notes and Queries in anthropology, London.
(8) " C.G., Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan, London 1932, p 1)
(9) Hofmayer W., The Shilluk, Vienna 1927, p. 9)
(10) Seligman , C.G., Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, No 11
London 1906, pp. 190/211)
The figures in brackets indicate the number of persons measured.
(11) Seligman, C.G., Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan, London 1932, p. 418
(12) see above, Table "C" Do a 4, and a 4 have three lines.
(13) Butt A., 1952, p 28
(14) see above, table "C"
(15) see above , table "C", and Do p 3, he was the son of King Dak, who adopted
the name of Omar, and converted to Islam.
(16) Seligman C.G., Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan, London 1932, p 49
(17) Butt, A., 1952, p 28
(18) Hofmayer, W., The Shilluk, Vienna 1927, p 344
(19) Ibid, p. 345
(20) Ibid, p. 345
[114] (21) This may be explained by the wish to let the right arm always free to throw
spears or anything else. Also Seligman (1932, p 43) error when he said that
" the inhabitants of a village, Fetiman, wear a covering several inches in
length... on the shoulder - left for men and right for women- so that it is
not hidden by the shoulder cloth."
(22) Hofmayer, W., 1927, p 345/346
[117 (23) This is the case I have observed the Shilluk who came under the influence
997] of missions or who are converted to Christianity wore European shirts and
shirts, and the Shilluk who are converted to Islam wears the usual dress white
dress, with a turban.
(24) Hofmayer, W., 1927, p 35
(25) Butt, A., The Nilotes of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and Uganda, London 1952,
p. 32
(26) Ibid, p 30
[118] (27) There is a similar ceremony among the Nuer of investing the new chief with
a leaf drum.